The Iron Brigade

A STORY OF THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

By GEN. CHARLES KING

Author of "Norman Holt," "The Colonel's Daughter," "Fort Frayne," Etc.

CHAPTER III.—CONTINUED.

Lincoln's rugged features had already begun to take on a shade of anxiety. The lines were digging farther in about the sombre eyes and the broad humorous mouth by the time the tall, gaunt president, in the abnormally tall top hat—the fashion of the day—took to driving out to Kalorama in the August evenings, Mr. Secretary Seward dwarfing at his side—to take the air and look at the one western brigade of all the commands then being molded by Gen. McClellan into what was to become the grand army of the Potomac. While at first Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania had been represented in the huge command assigned to Fred Benton's general, with one exception all eastern regiments were transferred to other divisions as more Badgers arrived, and finally, when the first frosts of October had turned the Virginia shores to fire and, strongly entrenched, the union army covered the long front from Alexandria to beyond the Chain Bridge, it was a brigade of four strong, stalwart regiments, three from Wisconsin and one from Indiana, not an eastern or middle state represented in their array, that this compact command was designated, of all others, to encamp upon the beautiful Arlington estate, and the general and his staff were directed to occupy as headquarters the fine old mansion, long the seat of a famous family. The Badger brigadier moved in and took possession of the homestead of his old-time friend and associate in the corps of engineers, when as junior officers they were building Fort Monroe, and 4,000 men of the west pitched their white tents on the lands of Virginia's knightly soldier—Robert E. Lee.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT WAS FOUND AT MANASSAS.

Dark and dreary the winter of the first year of the war closed in on the camps about the capital. Between the Long Bridge and the heights of Arlington lay a sea of mud. Dull red, the Virginia roads were gullied deep by the wheels of cannon, ambulance and army wagon that sank now to the very hubs in sticky mire, and time and again stalled the needed supplies almost within sight of their destination. In vain the darky drivers doubled their teams and plied lash and blasphemy. Hour after hour the order would ring through the swarming streets of the nearest camp: "Turn out, boys—more wagons stuck in the mud!" and by whole companies, regulars or volunteers, the men would wade knee-deep to the scene, and with fence rails as levers and drag ropes over the brawny shoulders, prying, pushing, hauling and shouting they would "yank" the heavy rolling stock, one by one, from the slough of their despond and tide them over to the next camp beyond, and so, from slough to slough, pass them on their final destination.

But while the roads and flats were quagmires, up along the wooded heights the ground was fairly dry and well drained, and there the four regiments, three of which had drilled through August on the broad, level plateau of Kalorama, and much of the early fall about Chain Bridge, were now kept from morn till night busily at their soldier task. The general held that the less time soldiers had to kill the happier and heartier they were, and determined was he that the splendid material confided to his charge should be molded into equally splendid, soldierly shape—that the one exclusively western brigade of the now well-organized army should be second to none in point of instruction, discipline and efficiency. To this end, drills by squad, company and battalion, all three, were of daily occurrence, followed by dress parade at sundown, and all this supplemented by long, searching inspections every Sunday morning. Presently, too, he was able, by a mile march through the woods, to reach an open plain out toward Ball's cross roads, and there have brigade evolutions twice a week. Then the full uniform of the regulars had been drawn for the entire command, the Indiana boys shedding the semi-Zouave garb of gray in favor of the army blue, as had certain of their Wisconsin comrades at Chain Bridge as early as September. One Badger regiment, the Second, whose men lorded it somewhat over their fellows because they had been all through Bull Run and, despite fairly heavy losses, retired in good order—had even obtained the quaint, stiff, Kossuth hat, looped up on one side and garnished with cord and brasses and feathers—the headgear of the regulars at the time—and were dubbed the "Black Hats" by envious comrades of other commands. Their original field officers had disappeared somewhere about the time of that initial battle, and in their place had come a stocky little black-bearded West Pointer as colonel, with a most soldierly ex-captain of state militia as his second, and then the whole brigade had to be fitted out with white gloves, and some nearby regulars were detailed to show them how best to polish their belts and boxes, and great was the competition among the four regiments to win the honor of headquarters guard and orderlies.

Then, as freezing weather set in with December and it became possible for carriages to come bumping and swaying over the icy bowlders and ridges into which the almost liquid mud had been transformed, many generals of rank, and statesmen by the score, and even the president himself, began paying visits to Arlington and bringing curious and distinguished foreigners with them.

There was one visitor who could not come too often. He came, however, only twice or thrice. He never left his carriage, but sat there lounging comfortably on the back seat, usually with Secretary Seward by his side, just as he used to come to nearer Kalorama, and, after he had chatted with the general a while, he would drive through the regimental camps to receive the tumultuous greeting of "the boys," to wave his hat and smile at them, and sometimes, when they crowded about him, to stop and shake hands with the nearmost, and once or twice to tell some whimsical story that would set his hearers shouting with glee.

But if the rugged features beamed with kindliness and sympathy early in the December days and had ever a smile in return for the greeting of the shouting boys in blue, senior officers who best knew him became aware of a growing anxiety and impatience on his part ere Christmas came in, and the crowded camps were jubilant with feasting and good cheer. The beloved little commanding general had been taken ill with a fever and confined to his bed. The president to whom he owed his appointment had as yet no information as to that general's plans, and, strange as it may seem, the two or three men in his, McClellan's, confidence were strangers at the white house and the departments. When, in his anxiety and sympathy, the president called in person at the invalid's house, he was neither asked to the bedside nor given information as to when the general would be able to resume duty. As a consequence the president had to turn to other sources, and Fred's division commander, McDowell, was the first he sought. He was forever asking questions as to the condition of the roads, the possibility of moving guns and trains, and showing not a little eagerness when told that through January, at least, they ought to be hard and firm, but rough.

And yet, save for more drills and ceremonies, and in spite of the clamor of the nation, the press and the government, the army moved not, and the fine weather of December was gone and January came, and stories went

"NOW, WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO SAY?"

from fire to fire that the president and the people had become irritated at the long delay, and that Little Mac was being urged and importuned and even blamed. "Let Little Mac alone," said the boys. "He knows what he's about;" for even in their impatience nothing could shake their loyalty.

At last the president took the law into his hands and issued his first order directing the advance of an army in the field. And at last, its corps organization completed now—though with generals not of McClellan's choice—to the glorious music of the innumerable bands, in splendid weather and in splendid spirits, the long blue columns filed out from the shelter of the circling fortifications and took the road to Centreville.

Promotion had by this time carried Fred's division commander to the head of a corps and his brigade commander to the head of the fine division, in which until now the wild westerners had been numbered as the First brigade. Now they became the Third, and were both astonished and disgusted to find that their numerical destination depended not, as they were inclined to say, on their soldierly superiority, but upon the relative rank of the brigade commander. It galled them, to tell the truth, to find that the promotion to division rank of the West Point soldier who had organized, drilled and taught them from the start, involved a corresponding setback for themselves. Some Badgers took the matter so much to heart as to declare that the general should have declined promotion—let somebody else step up to the command of the division rather than see his old comrades moved from the right to the left of the line, from front to rear of the column. In vain were they assured that it really made no earthly difference, that the brigade would take turns at the head of the column on the march, and, as for the line of battle, they would get just as much fighting on the left as on the right.

However, the brigade strode away most vigorously on the march to Manasses, was one of the first to reach the storied stream that wound along at the foot of the heights, was one of the most disgusted to find the "impregnable system of powerful works" held only by Quaker guns and abandoned impedimenta, but to Fred Benton and his general there came a lively sensation in the report from the lips of the bearded colonel of the "Black Hats." His men had stumbled on a lot of letters and luggage unaccountably left behind even in the calm deliberation of the confederate withdrawal—the property of certain officers of the Eleventh Alabama.

CHAPTER V.

A STARTLING RESEMBLANCE.

Most skillfully and leisurely had "Joe" Johnston, the confederate commander, withdrawn his army to the line of the upper Rappahannock. When the first of the union cavalry under Averell came twinkling into view along the heights of Centreville, the last of Johnston's 50,000—all he had to face McClellan's field force of probably double that number—was reluctantly riding away from Manassas. More for exercise and the name of the thing than with the idea of a fight, "Little Mac" had sent his big corps forward to the scene of McDowell's defeat of the previous July, and for a whole day Fred Benton and his Badger comrades wandered about the Junction, the Henry house, the Warrenton pike and the old Stone Bridge, gathering relics and information, and it was while so occupied that a squad of busy searchers had stumbled on two or three boxes in an abandoned hut—boxes that when burst open were found to contain letters, papers and clothing belonging to men of the Eleventh Alabama, and as luck would have it, to First Lieut. Paul Ladue.

"Now, what have you got to say?" demanded officers of the Montgomery guard, a home company, as one of them shook under Benton's paling face an open letter addressed to Ladue. "Will you own up that he was a reb all the time?"

"No," said Benton sadly. "He would have remained there taking care of his old father if it hadn't been for that mob, and more than one of your men was in it, Capt. O'Kane, as you very well know."

Eight months had passed and the matter of that purloined letter was as deep a mystery as ever, and now here at Manassas, and, of all others, to the men of the Badger brigade had come confirmation of the statement insisted on by McKinnon and denounced as a lie and forgery by Paul Ladue—that the fiery young southerner was actually an officer of the Eleventh Alabama. The absent are ever in the wrong, and with sad heart poor Fred listened to the chorus of denunciation that followed the discovery. He knew that within 48 hours a dozen letters would be flying homeward with the exciting news, so what was the use of attempting to suppress it?

By his general's advice he wrote to his father forthwith, telling him of the finding of letters and luggage belonging to Paul, the letters all tending to show that he was now an officer of the Eleventh Alabama—but that he, Fred, still believed Paul's statement to the effect that he had accepted neither commission nor appointment up to the time he was banished from his northern home. The general added some words of his own, and then as a courier was to start for Washington from McDowell's headquarters that evening, Fred was given leave to ride thither, and thereby assure their letters going ahead of the others.

It was an unusually bright and beautiful afternoon, as, followed by his orderly, the young officer took the Sudley Springs road and trotted away northward in search of the corps commander. As he came in view of the now famous Henry house and the cleared fields up the slope to the right, it lacked two hours to sunset. He was now barely a mile from the Warrenton pike and, with abundant time to spare, he decided to ride to the crest and have a look at the battle ground of the previous year. In front of him, 100 yards away, stood the old Virginia homestead about whose walls the battle raged that hot July Sunday of the year gone by—beneath whose shattered roof the poor mother died, stricken by whirring fragments of shell. Riding thither and skirting the enclosure, he passed on, unchecked by silent, saluting guardsmen, and as he rode something prompted him to glance toward the house again, and there at a jagged shell hole, just under the eaves, peering at him between the shattered clapboards, his keen eyes caught an instant glimpse of a haggard face—a face that, at his glance, was instantly withdrawn.

Three minutes later, out on the northward edge of the plateau, he unslung his field-glass to study the country outspread before him. Still thinking of the face at that jagged hole, some sudden impulse prompted him to quickly turn in saddle, to bring the powerful lenses to bear on a little window under the peak of the roof of the Henry house, and there was the face again, furtive, frightened, he could swear, and again, instantly it popped out of sight.

But his heart had given leap as sudden as the sight. He whirled his horse to the leftabout and rode straight for the rear entrance to the garden. Another moment and, dismounting, he rapped loudly at the door. A tall, slim man of middle age appeared and, with grave courtesy but without welcome in his tones, asked the purpose of his coming.

"I am Lieut. Benton, sir—aide-de-camp to the general commanding the division guarding your premises, and I have a question to ask as to the occupant of your garret."

Instantly there came from just within the doorway to an inner room a half stifled cry—a gasp—a rustle of skirts. The tall man turned thither a quick glance of warning and rebuke, then, visibly paler, again faced his caller.

[To Be Continued.]

An Unuttered Thought.

Two Irishmen serving in an English regiment were good chums until Rooney was raised to the rank of sergeant. Forthwith his chest expanded, and from that time on he looked down on McGrane.

One day McGrane approached Rooney, and said, "Mike—I mean sergeant—s'pose a private stepped up to a sergeant and called him a conceited monkey, phwat wud happen?"

"He'd be put in the gyard-house."

"He wud?"

"He wud."

"Well, now s'pose the private on'y thought the sergeant was a conceited monkey, and didn't say a wurd about it. Wud he be put in the gyard-house?"

"Av coorse not."

"Well, thin, we'll lave it go at that."—Youth's Companion.

Going a Roundabout Way.

Some time ago Dr. Gott, now bishop of Truro, was traveling on the London underground railway. One of his fellow-passengers was a religious man of the aggressive type, who is always anxious for the souls of others, but has nothing in the way of a white tie to explain the fact to the world at large.

Quoth the enthusiast, "Where are you going to?"

Dr. Gott, with his gentle manner, answered, "to Victoria station," to which his companion replied. "I'm going to Heaven."

"So, I hope, am I," said the future bishop, "but I'm going via Victoria."—Onlooker.

HARD TO TELL.

She—And so your late relative lived to be 100 years old. Did he retain his faculties until the last?

He—Well, we haven't read the will yet.—Northern Budget.

TO HIDE THE FIREPLACE.

Fill It with Greenery to Take Away Reminder of Heat and Add Other Decoration If Desired.

Now is the time when our attention must be turned to the decoration of our grates. Fires will have been done away, and spring cleaning accomplished, and the fireplace will have a deserted, forsaken appearance, and the glowing embers of yesterday must be replaced in some way or other.

Of course, screens are to be bought, but good ones are expensive, and, after all, there is a great deal of sameness in the ready-made article. Clever fingers, with very little expense of time and material, may manufacture something more original—such, for example, as our sketch illustrates.

Against a background of greenery, which may consist of pots of palms, ferns, etc., or of vases filled with branches of oak, beech, or any other woodland foliage, stands a gigantic spider's web, which, if a wise discrimination be exercised in the choice of

FOR SUMMER DAYS.

color, will have a very realistic effect. A leaf-green sheet of cardboard should be selected, or this not being obtainable, whiet cardboard should be painted over in oil or water-colors, shading here and there. Cut out a circle of this and divide into eight sections by lines drawn across and across, and then curve the edge of each section to the shape depicted.

Obtain some silver tinsel, and stretch across the middle from point to point, and then, commencing at the edge, wind the tinsel round and round, until the surface is covered and the center is reached. It will be found necessary to tack the tinsel here and there to keep it in the required curved position. To keep the whole in position, some support must be placed behind the screen. For this a good plan would be to take a length of thick, strong wire, bend it to form an angle, the apex of which should be sewn in the center of the back, the two ends being attached to two of the points of the web, and continuing to the ground. The portion of them which is exposed to view should be concealed by a length of tinsel twisted round them.

ABOUT TABLE ETIQUETTE.

Very Good People Are Careless of Ceremony Sometimes, But It Is Regrettable.

First of all, learn to sit erect at the table. Do not lounge in your chair nor lean forward to catch mouthfuls; nothing looks worse than to see a person doing this.

A man naturally stands until the women at the table are all seated, and if a woman should come to the table after everyone is seated, the men should rise and remain standing until she is seated. This, of course, is more likely to happen in a cafe or hotel dining-room than in the home life, but even at home this principle must be carried out. It is a point that every man should remember, and even the children should be taught to practice it on all occasions.

Talking of this reminds me of what I saw recently in a ballroom. An elderly woman of distinction was walking with her escort around the room. As she passed a man of her acquaintance she bowed very graciously, and the man, instead of rising, merely inclined his head. What a lack of good breeding was shown in that one simple act of his.

But, to return to the etiquette of the table, on entering the dining-room for any meal precedence is given to the lady of the house, and it is a graceful courtesy for her husband or son to place her chair for her. At small, informal dinners or luncheons the hostess leads the way, inviting her guests to follow. At a cafe or hotel dining-room the head waiter shows the way to the table. The chaperone and women enter the room first, followed by the men.

At large dinners the men and women enter the dining-room arm-in-arm. When seated the women remove their gloves and put them in their laps, unfold the napkin once and lay it across their knees.

Wrinkles.

Wrinkles and creases should always be massaged in the opposite direction—that is upward and outward. It is well to learn the anatomy of the face before attempting to erase wrinkles. The general rule given above is established, but does not provide for exceptions in individual cases.

Muslin Gowns.

Soft muslin gowns in delicate colors are being made with white lace or batiste embroidery yokes and guimpes. Similarly, gowns of eyelet embroidery have guimpes of plain material, usually very diaphanous in texture.

FASHIONS FOR CHILDREN.

Blue Cottons Liked for Children's Clothes and for Their Coats Pongees and Shepherd Plaids.

In color, a shade of blue somewhat deeper than the porcelain of last season seems to be the prime favorite. It comes in all sorts of wash fabrics, from a serviceable chambray at ten cents a yard, through the various priced mercerized effects, to the best quality of linen. As to choice, experienced mothers say that either extreme is better than the medium-priced goods, and very pretty effects are evolved from the cheaper chambray stitched with white and trimmed with a bit of hand embroidery. The most desirable of those little frocks are made with separate collar, guimpes or berthas, and the handwork in white scalloping bowknots, fleur-de-lis or small geometrical powderlings appear on these separate pieces.

For all-white coats of a dressy character either pongee or a highly-finished silk is employed. Very little plain taffetas or corded silk is seen in coats. The new sleeves are roomy in the armhole and stand out smartly, even as those worn by older women. In colored coats nothing is more desirable than the small checks or shepherd's plaid in black and white. The smartest checked coats are the simplest, but they show black stitiching with straps and buttons of black velvet. A little gayer are the same checks, piped and faced with red, and trimmed with gold buttons. Red and white, always an effective combination for dark children, is used this summer, and gay little coats of cardinal red silk are made with collars showing English eyelet work, a very simple stitch to acquire, done in heavy white silk. Another gay coat was of bright red cloth, lined with red and white checked silk, and finished with a collar of white lace. But the observing mother will soon realize that the simpler styles are the smarter this season, and she will not be appalled at the prospect of excessive trimming.

Fancy straws, in quaint poke shapes and trimmed simply with flowers, are in vogue, and soft effects are secured by facing these hats with wee shirrings or triple flounce, the sheerest of habutai silk being used for this purpose.

GOOD CUCUMBER CREAM.

A Cosmetic Made of This Common Vegetable Whitens Without Injuring the Skin.

Here is a formula for cucumber cream that cannot be excelled. It can be made at home, if you are careful to have all utensils exquisitely clean and ingredients properly measured and weighed. The "cucumber season" will soon be here, and it will be well for you to cut this out for use when it is time. Cut up enough cucumbers (when ripe enough for the table) to weigh two pounds; mash them in a hardwood bowl and let them stand all day; melt three and one-half ounces of oil of sweet almonds, two and one-half drams of white wax, and nine drams of spermaceti over hot water; strain the liquor from the cucumbers and heat it a little; then stir in the melted oils, gradually; set in the ice-chest to harden; then beat with a wooden spatula to separate the watery from the solid part; pour off the former and beat in a half ounce of glycerine without heating, working with the hands. It will become thoroughly incorporated into a cream. Put in small jars, pour a little rosewater over the top, cover and keep in a cool place. It is a delightfully cool, as well as a fine bleaching cream.—Selected.

AN EMBROIDERY DESIGN.

This Graceful Pattern Is Not a Difficult One to Follow and May Be Worked Plain or in Colors.

A number of uses may be found for a pretty design such as this. Now that embroidered galloons are so much used for trimming dresses and blouses, this design worked on strips of silk

GRACEFUL PATTERN.

or fine cloth would be very effective. It could be worked with silk or flax thread of one color, or in colors of the flowers and foliage. The buds are worked in satin and knot-stitches, the leaves and small flowers all in satin-stitch, the stalks in cording-stitch.

Erect Shoulders.

One way to correct round shoulders in a schoolboy or girl is to teach them to sleep on a very stiffly stuffed hair mattress, with a pillow that lifts the head but an inch above the level of the rest of the body. A soft bed and plenty of easy pillows is one of the prime causes of crooked shoulders among our American children. To sleep with the head very high is a mistake, and a soft bed is not by any means the most beneficial one.

On Memorial Day

By SIDNEY DAYRE

How it began was never fully understood, but it was well known that Rob Wells and Will Barnes were not good friends as formerly. There had been some trouble in the arithmetic class. Rob believed that Will had overlooked some of his figuring and in the advantage gained by this was able to stand better than he otherwise would have done. This was a mistake, but Will was too proud to say so. The breach once made kept widening, until one boy was ready to believe almost anything of the other.

The two lived on the outskirts of a lively town, but their homes differed widely. Rob's was set in the middle of a yard adorned with grass and trees. At one side was a small garden which was Rob's especial pride. He was fond of flowers, and delightedly spent in the care of them many hours which other boys would have given to play. Snowballs, lilacs and early roses skirted his garden on one side, flowering vines climbed upon the house, and in the neatly kept beds blooming plants which had through the winter been tenderly petted in the house were planted as early as the weather would permit. His mother fostered his love for flowers, and the boys all understood and smiled over his fancies about them.

"I see you're putting out your geraniums, Rob," said a companion as he came on the playground on the morning. "I passed that way, and they look fine."

"Yes," said Rob, his face beaming. "I always like to get them out as early as I dare."

"I'm afraid you're daring too much. My father says we're going to have frost yet."

"Well, I'm chancing it," said Rob, with a doubtful shake of his head. "I really hadn't the heart to keep them in the house any longer. Every time I went near them they looked at me so pleadingly, as if they wanted to say: 'Do see how bright the sun is and how warm the air is. Do let us out.' So I did it, and you ought to have seen them smile."

"Didn't they say, 'Thank you?'"

"Well, almost. Not quite, but they would if they could."

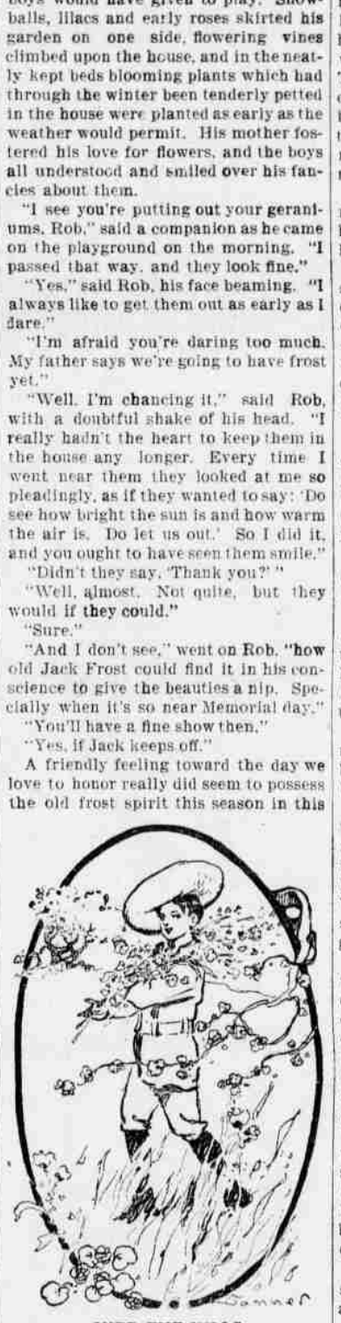
"Sure."

"And I don't see," went on Rob, "how old Jack Frost could find it in his conscience to give the beauties a nip. Specially when it's so near Memorial day."

"You'll have a fine show then."

"Yes, if Jack keeps off."

A friendly feeling toward the day we love to honor really did seem to possess the old frost spirit this season in this



OVER THE HILLS.

locality, for he passed by on tip-toe, keeping his cruel fingers away from the lovely bloom.

Will Barnes was among others who lingered wistfully, when he was sure of being unobserved, near Rob's gay little plat. His love for flowers was equal to that of Rob, but all opportunity for gratifying it seemed shut out of his life. He lived in one of a row of small houses, straight, bare and unhomelike. He had tried to raise grass in the strip of ground before the door, and had planted seed in the morsel of a back yard. He had brought a wild vine from the woods and tried to train it against the front of the house. But back and front yards were undivided from the others, and the dainty shoots for which he eagerly watched were soon trampled down by careless footsteps, while the vine one day wilted, and on examination was found broken off near the root.

The schoolboys entered heart and soul into the celebration of Memorial day. Proud was he who had a grandfather who had borne his part in the national struggle—next to him those who could boast of uncles and cousins to a remote degree. Those who could ring in no ties of blood joined in a spirit of general patriotism.

"I declare, Rob," said one of his friends on the day before, "your flowers look as if they knew what they were being raised for."

"Don't they?" said Rob, eagerly, as the two stood and gazed at the luxuriant bloom. "Don't they look just as if they wanted to say, 'We're proud to do our part in honoring heroes. We're ready to die in a good cause, just as they did?'"

"Yes, yes," said his friend, with a laugh. "I'm not sure but I can more than half hear them say it. You could almost trust them to make the memorial speech."

The little garden was bounded on one side by a cross street, thus allowing abundant freedom of observation to those who passed that way. As the boys talked Will Barnes was diagonally crossing the main street toward the corner, with a view of feasting his eyes as he turned in that direction. But catching sight of the boys he quickly changed his course and kept on with an averted face.

"There's jealousy for you," said Rob's companion. "He can't bear to see you enjoying what he can't have himself."

"What a scowl!"

It was not, however, a scowl, but a look of keen pain which had overspread the boy's face at thought of being not only shut out from the enjoyment of such possesion, but from the gratification of being counted among those who could bring loveliness to honor the resting place of heroes. As he hurried on a new thought struck him.

"There's wild flowers. Anybody can get those, and they're as beautiful as anything."

Leaving school as early as possible, he took a long walk over the hills, coming back with arms laden with woody treasures. Blue bells, dogwood and redbud—in their delicate loveliness they would compare well with the choicest treasures of the garden. Twilight was advancing as he neared home. Passing by Rob's garden, he paused for a moment to inhale the perfume of a lilac which hung over the fence, when his attention was attracted to a movement inside.

"Looks as if nobody was at home," he said, remarking the closed and soaped window. Then as his eyes strained through the shadows he perceived that a cow was quietly feeding on Bob's choicest flowers.

Laying down his burden, he bounded with a shout through the front gate, which had been left open by some careless hand. Seizing a stick, he dealt so vigorously with the intruder as soon to send her flying through the back yard and out into the alley. Through this he went himself, fastening it, and then returning to the front to see that the gate there was securely closed. Recovering his flowers, he went home. But where was he to put them? The evening was chilly, but inside the small house it was close and hot. Very well he knew that the tender bloom would wilt in the uncongenial atmosphere. There was no place outside where he could be sure that they would be safe, but with many misgivings he at last hid them under the steps of a back porch, resolving to be up early to guard against marauders.

Meantime Rob Wells, with the other members of his family, reached home an hour or two later, to be met by the kitchen maid with dire news.

"Yes garden's about ruined," she said. "I heard a noise, but before I could get there the meddlin' thief was off. I've took a light out to see and it's—oh, my! He might 'a' been satisfied with thievin' without tramplin' things down so."

"Who was it?" cried Bob in wrath. "Couldn't you see anybody?"

"Well, I wouldn't like to be put on my oath to say it, but if ever a boy that I just caught the sight of runnin' through the alley gate looked like one boy more than another that boy would be Will Barnes."

"Just like him. He's always looking enviously at my flowers. And now—just before Memorial day—"

"I smoothed things up a little," added Jane, as, choking with anger and with tears which he could not repress, Rob hurried out and bent over his dearly loved flowers, breathing out wrath and threatening at the destroyer.

"I'll go to him the first thing in the morning. I'll tax him with it. I'll make him own up, and then we'll see who's the best fellow."

Jane, full of indignant sympathy told the milk boy and the grocer's boy, so that by the time Rob was on his way in the morning to call Will to account half the boys in town had heard that Will Barnes, possessed by a spirit of spite and envy, had spoiled Rob Wells' garden.

Meanwhile Will, having after his long wood stroll overslept himself, had come down in haste to look after his flowers, only to find that more alert eyes had discovered them. All the children in the row were quarreling over the wonderful find under the porch. As with a sinking heart he was turning away he came suddenly face to face with Rob Wells. The latter felt himself full of words with which to overwhelm his foe, but he now stood for a moment for pure lack of anything strong enough. And at sight of him Will suddenly forgot his own trouble in recalling Rob's somewhat similar one.

"Oh," he began, with a look of frank sympathy, "how is it about your garden, anyway? If I had only got there a few minutes earlier I might have had that old cow out before she had done much mischief. It was a little too dark for me to see," he went on, as Rob stared into his face without speaking. "Did you find things very bad?"

"It was—a cow, was it?" said Rob, taken quite aback by this most unlooked-for turn in the matter. "And you drove her out?"

"Yes. How is it going to be with your decoration flowers?"

"Come over and help me fix them up," said Rob, after a pause.

"I will, after breakfast."

For an hour the two worked together setting the beds in order, finding a much better supply left than they had dared to hope. Rob, as he went on, was laying the flowers in two lots.

"These are for you," he said, as they finished. "Yes, indeed," as Will objected, "if it hadn't been for you I shouldn't have had any."

"Rob," said Will, as they walked together to the place of meeting, "I didn't do that you thought I did."

"Why didn't you tell me so before?" said Rob, half indignantly.

"Oh, I was mad at your thinking it, and wouldn't."

"We'll be friends after this."

"Yes, or know the reason why."

The schoolboys stared as the two came together, carrying equal shares of what all recognized as the product of Rob's garden.

"Will saved my garden last night," Rob explained to those within hearing, who soon sent the explanation down the line. "If it hadn't been for him I shouldn't have had a flower this morning."

The two stood together listening to the orator of the day as he said:

"To-day we draw the mantle of God-like charity over the past, and loving hands pay equal tribute to the blue and the gray. Brother and brother once faced each other in combat, but they now clasp hands in fellowship, knowing it a good thing for man to wipe out all bitter remembrance of the past.

Rob nudged Will, whispering:

"For boys, too."

Memorial Day.

Children, bring your sweetest flowers?
North and south and east and west,
Bring the flowers you love the best,
Lay them where the soldiers rest.

Children, bring your sweetest flowers,
In memory of the gift they gave,
Every noble man and brave
Who sleeps within a soldier's grave.
—Anna M. Pratt, in Youth's Companion.

Exposing Family Secrets.

Teacher—Now, children, when anything is quite large we often say it is a monster.

Jimmy Jones—Huh! That's what maw says paw is, an' he ain't no big man.—Chicago Sun.